SEP 19 1984

Background Information Report

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RESEARCH UNIT FOR URBAN STUDIES
MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
HAMILTON, ONTARIO

THE ALBION FALLS NEIGHBOURHOOD

Planning and Development Department
Hamilton-Wentworth Region
July 1983

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LIST OF MAPS

MAP	TITLE
1	Neighbourhoods in the City of Hamilton
2	Acquisition Priorities
3	Approved Plan

I. INTRODUCTION

The following text elaborates on the Council adopted Approved Plan for the Albion Falls Neighbourhood. The text is a background document describing what went into devising the Plan. This information has not been adopted by any political body and has no formal status. It will, however, serve as a guide for future development in the area.

The Approved Neighbourhood Plan expands on the Official Plan in guiding the growth and development of the Albion Falls Neighbourhood. The Plan is flexible, and City Council has the power to amend it after considering any proposed change. However, the Plan does provide a neighbourhood framework for road layouts and detailed land uses into which each individual development should fit. It is used to evaluate development proposals and is a guide for public investment.

The Albion Falls Plan was adopted by the City of Hamilton on January 12, 1982, after input from public and government agencies. It is hoped that this document will provide the necessary information for use by the public.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

The Albion Falls Neighbourhood is bounded by the C.N.R. Tracks to the west; Limeridge Road East and the Mountain Brow to the north; Hamilton City Limits to the east; and Stone Church Road East to the south. May 1 shows the location of the neighbourhood in relationship to the rest of the City.

The Neighbourhood covers an area of 85 hectares or 210.4 acres (1981 Land Use Characteristics). Situated at the junction of the Red Hill Valley and the Niagara Escarpment, the area is characterized by a large amount of open space. The abundance of trees and shrubs enhance the physical beauty of the Neighbourhood provided by its attractive topography.

The population of the Albion Falls Neighbourhood is 327 persons (1982 Land Use Characteristics). There are 95 dwelling units (1981 Land Use Characteristics) in the area with an average of 3.5 persons (1981 Land Use Characteristics) in each unit.

The newer homes in the area, which are located in the north-west corner of the Neighbourhood, were built between 1975 and 1977. Other homes, scattered throughout the central part of the area, may date back as far as the early 1800's.

Community services are absent from the area. There are no schools, churches, libraries, fire or police facilities within the Neighbourhood boundaries.

III. POLICIES AFFECTING THE AREA BEFORE THE PLAN WAS PREPARED

Before the Neighbourhood Plan could be prepared, there were a number of special policies affecting the area, which had to be considered. These policies were as follows:

i) Official Plan Subsection A.3.2 - Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Environmentally sensitive areas are to be preserved in their natural state. However, limited development may be permissible, subject to assessment of impacts and sensitive design measured to retain the natural attributes of the area;

ii) Official Plan Subsection A.2.9.1 - Niagara Escarpment

It is the intent of this Plan to protect and preserve the valuable attributes of the Niagara Escarpment throughout the City, to recognize the potential of so doing through the actions of the Niagara Escarpment Commission, and to conform with the policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan;

iii) Official Plan Subsection A.3.1 - Hazard Lands

Hazard Lands are lands which, if developed upon, have inherent environmental hazards such as flood susceptibility, erosion susceptibility, instability, or any other physical conditions which are severe enough to pose a risk to occupants, loss of life, property damage, and social disruption. It is intended that all Hazard Lands will be conserved and that uses or activities which could be adversely affected by, or could increase the inherent hazards, will be prohibited in and adjacent to them; and,

iv) On April 29, 1980, Council approved a change in zoning from "M-12", "M-13", "M-14" to "L-1" (Planned Development - Industrial) District

of 9.5 hectares (23.5 acres) of land within the East Mountain Industrial Area, located north of Stone Church Road East, between Arbour Road and Pritchard Road. The purpose of the change was to place a temporary hold on the development of these lands pending the approval of a revised alignment for the Mountain Freeway, as it may affect these lands.

IV. BACKGROUND TO THE AMENDMENT

On March 19, 1980, the Neighbourhood Planning Section was instructed to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan Amendment for the Albion Falls Neighbourhood. The need for an Amendment was the result of the Mountain East-West and North-South Corridor Study. When the proposed Freeway location was changed, a substantial area of land was left for potential development.

A study was conducted to establish a suitable land use pattern for the area between Arbour Road, the Mountain Brow, and the proposed Mountain Freeway.

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V. DEVELOPING THE AMENDMENT

The Region prepared three alternative plans for this section of the Albion Falls Neighbourhood. These alternatives were then sent to various departments and agencies for their comments. The following responded to these alternatives:

i) Sections of the Local Planning Department of The Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth;

ii) The Department of Recreation of The Corporation of the City of Hamilton;

iii) The Hamilton Region Conservation Authority;

iv) The Ministry of the Environment;

v) The Niagara Escarpment Commission;

vi) The Department of Engineering of The Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth;

vii) The Department of Traffic of The Corporation of the City of Hamilton;

viii) The Board of Education for the City of Hamilton;

ix) The Planning Department of the Town of Stoney Creek; and,

x) The Hamilton-Wentworth Roman Catholic Separate School Board.

On January 29, 1981, a presentation was made to the Ward Aldermen regarding the proposed land uses. The Aldermen agreed in principle with the Planning staff suggestions.

The Plan was then presented to the Planning and Development Committee for authorization to hold a public meeting with the property owners and tenants. Authorization was received and the public meeting was scheduled for March 18, 1981. A group of 50 people was in attendance to see the proposed land use guidelines unveiled for the first time.

VI. PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENTS

Plan Proposal

The long-term proposal was to use the subject area for open space purposes. The section between the westerly limit of the Freeway Right-of-Way, the easterly City Limits, both sides of Mud Street, and both sides of the proposed road extension, known as Agate Street, is designated Residential. This proposal was to eliminate the cost of provision for hard and soft urban services and the construction of noise abatement measures along the Freeway Right-of-Way bordering the open space section.

The residentially designated area to the east of the proposed Freeway ties in with the Saltfleet community, although it is administratively separate.

The open space section will link the King's Forest area and the open space west of Arbour Road, emphasizing continuous pedestrian trails and providing active and passive recreation. Entrances to parking lots for the open space area could be at Limeridge Road, the Mountain Brow, and Pritchard Road.

Restaurant

The area above Mud Street offers a potential setting for an attractive restaurant with lookouts over Albion Falls and the Red Hill Valley to Lake Ontario. The use of land for a restaurant fits in with the concept of using the Albion Falls area for recreational purposes. The restaurant could be located on land presently owned by the City.

Road Pattern

Mountain Brow Boulevard would not be connected with Mud Street in line with the Master Plan for Red Hill Creek. This would avoid having traffic through

the most attractive part of the Albion Falls area and the use of Mountain Brow Boulevard as a major access to the downtown from the Saltfleet community. Vehicular access to the housing, which may remain in the open space designated after the Freeway is constructed, would be via Agate Street to the east and Pritchard Road to the south. Road closure would take place after the proposed Freeway was finished.

Public Lands

Some lands are owned by the City of Hamilton and the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth. Through acquisition of properties located within the Freeway Right-of-Way, sections of the public lands are beyond the Right-of-Way and are to be incorporated into the public open space. The remainder of the properties would be acquired in phases.

Funds

Funds for the acquisition of the open space designated area could be made available from three sources:

1. The sale of City-owned lands now designated Residential and located between the Freeway Right-of-Way, the easterly City Limits, north of Mud Street, and on both sides of the proposed road extension, known as Agate Street;

2. Five per cent park dedication acquisition fund and/or the park acquisition fund;

3. Sale of City-owned lands for the Red Hill Expressway; and,

4. Transfer of funds normally required to provide urban services by the Municipality.

VII. REACTIONS TO THE AMENDMENTS

Following the presentation of the Proposed Plan Amendments, concerned citizens and agencies began to show their feelings, both verbally and in the form of written submissions. There were no objections to the principle of open space designation for the Albion Falls Neighbourhood. The major concerns were the lack of engineering services; uncertainty about the future; the resulting poor maintenance of properties; and, the depreciation of property values.

VIII. POLICIES DEVISED RELATED TO THE PLAN

The acquisition policies which complemented the Neighbourhood Plan were aimed at solving the problems raised by the citizens and agencies involved with the Albion Falls Neighbourhood. The Neighbourhood Plan was to establish firm land use policies for the area and give a framework for decisions about engineering services.

Acquisition policies adopted by the Planning Department ensured that individuals in the area did not suffer hardship as a result of actions which were to benefit the entire community. It was believed that hardship would be suffered if the City did not have money available to purchase the property from those willing to sell. It was, therefore, recommended that financing be tied directly to the Plan.

Expropriation was not recommended because property owners would be less likely to maintain their properties. It was believed that the threat of expropriation would make private sales difficult. It was not felt that the removal of residential properties was paramount to the successful implementation of the Plan.

Priority for City purchase of land for open space was based on potential hardship suffered if lands were not bought. Priority was given as follows:

i) Ownership affected by holding zones;

ii) Owner occupied residential property;

iii) Rental residential property; and,

iv) Other property.

Map 2 shows the location of areas affected by the acquisition properties. It was estimated that City-owned lands for disposal would yield between $630,000 and $800,000. Approximately $1.75 million would be required to buy all the private lands proposed for open space.

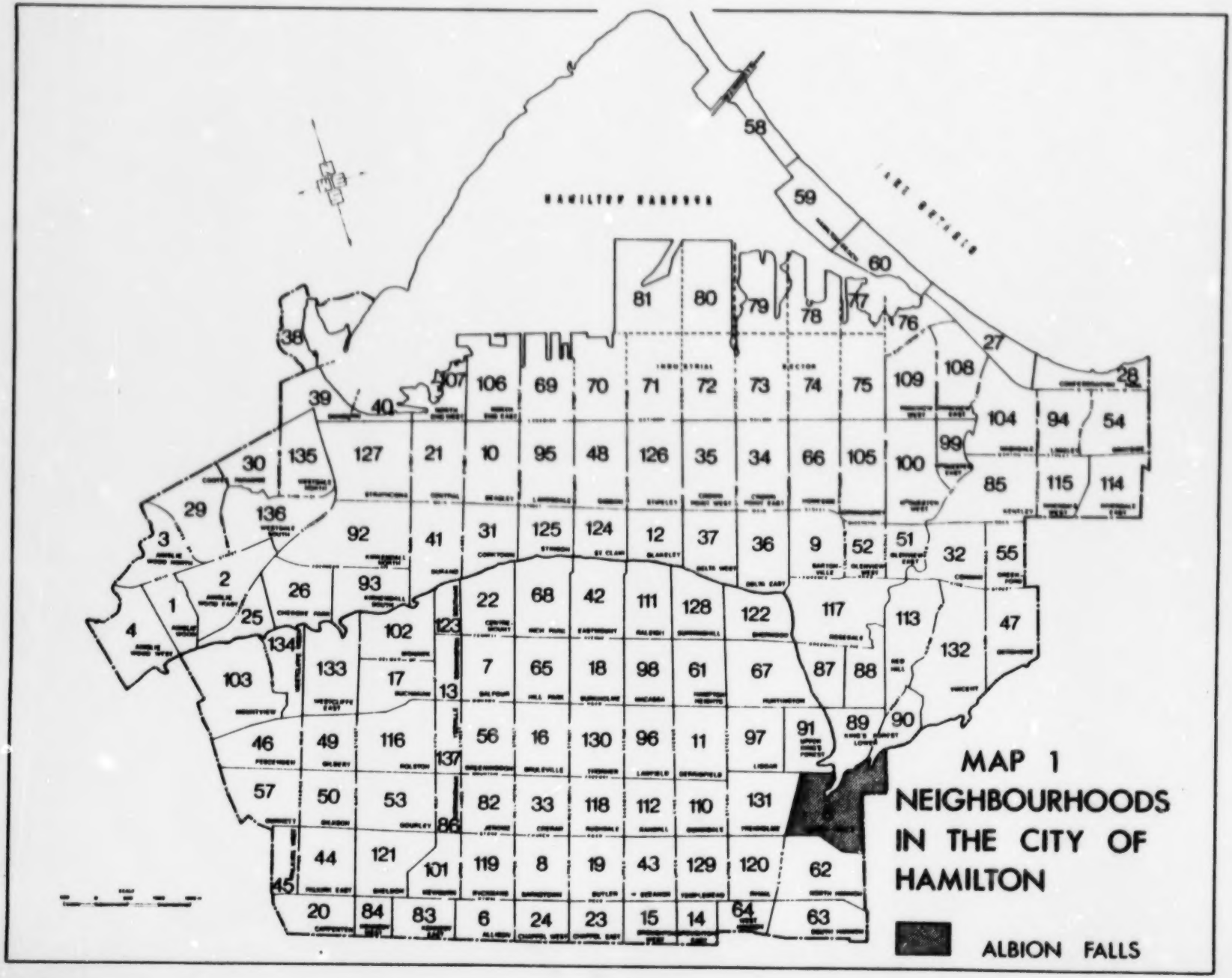
IX. PRESENT STATUS OF THE PLAN

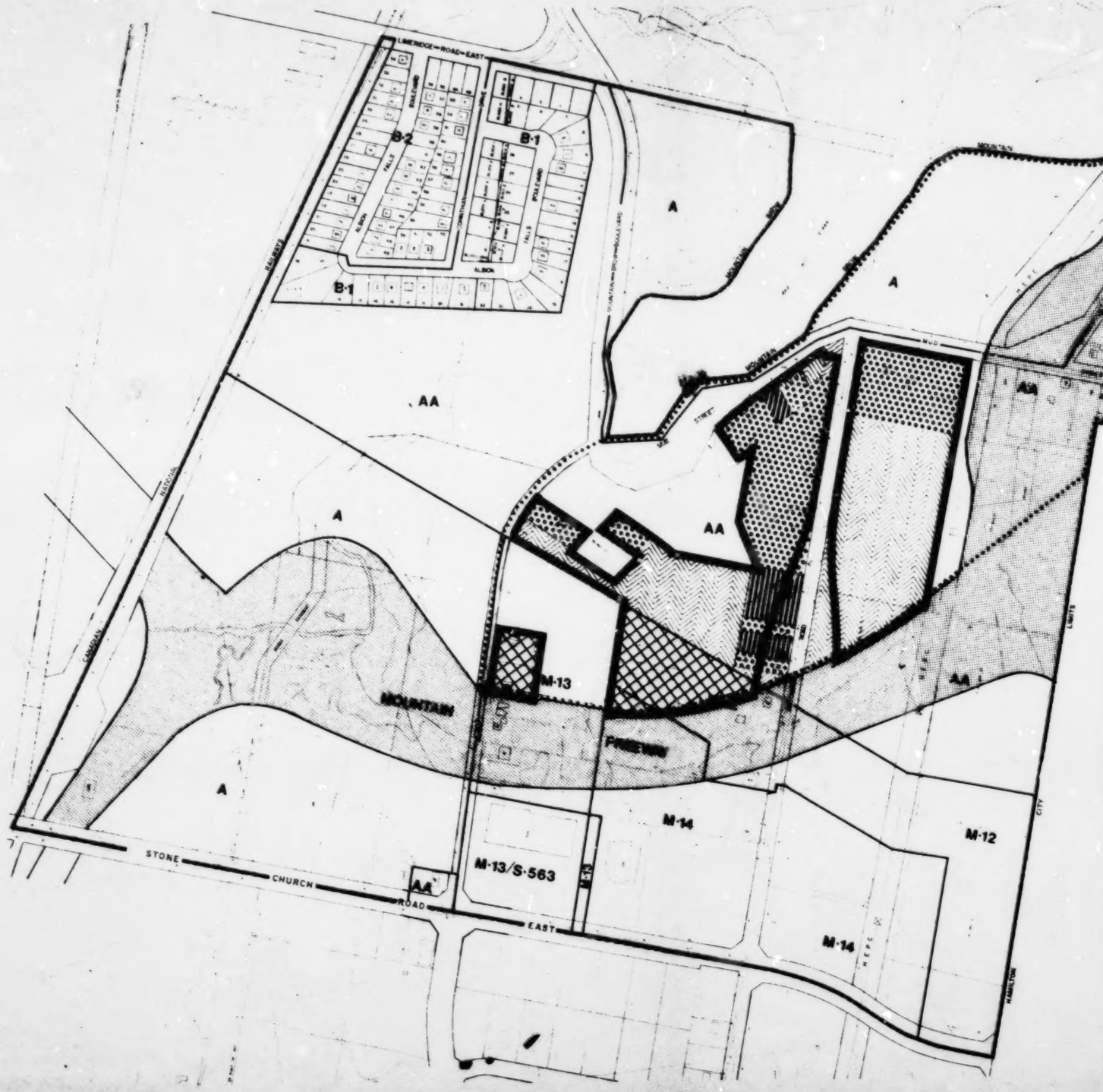
As a result of the Neighbourhood Plan Amendment, the overall plan for the Albion Falls area had to be approved. Approval by the Planning and Development Committee was given on December 9, 1981. Hamilton City Council approved the Plan on January 12, 1982. Map 3 shows the approved Neighbourhood Plan.

At the present time, any action concerning the proposed north-south expressway is awaiting the outcome of the Environmental Assessment Hearing scheduled for the Fall of 1983.

The Parks and Recreation Committee, at its meeting on September 30, 1982, tabled the recommendation respecting the sale of City-owned lands on the north side of Mud Street, between the City Limits and Mount Albion Road, until the Environmental Assessment Hearings have been completed.

MAPS


HAMILTON HARBOUR
LAKE ONTARIO
MAP 1
NEIGHBOURHOODS
IN THE CITY OF
HAMILTON
ALBION FALLS



Lands to be sold by the City of Hamilton

Lands to be purchased by the City of Hamilton

MAP 2 ACQUISITION PRIORITIES

Legend

- Land in Holding Zone
- Owner Occupier
- Owners of Rented Homes
- Other Owners

STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

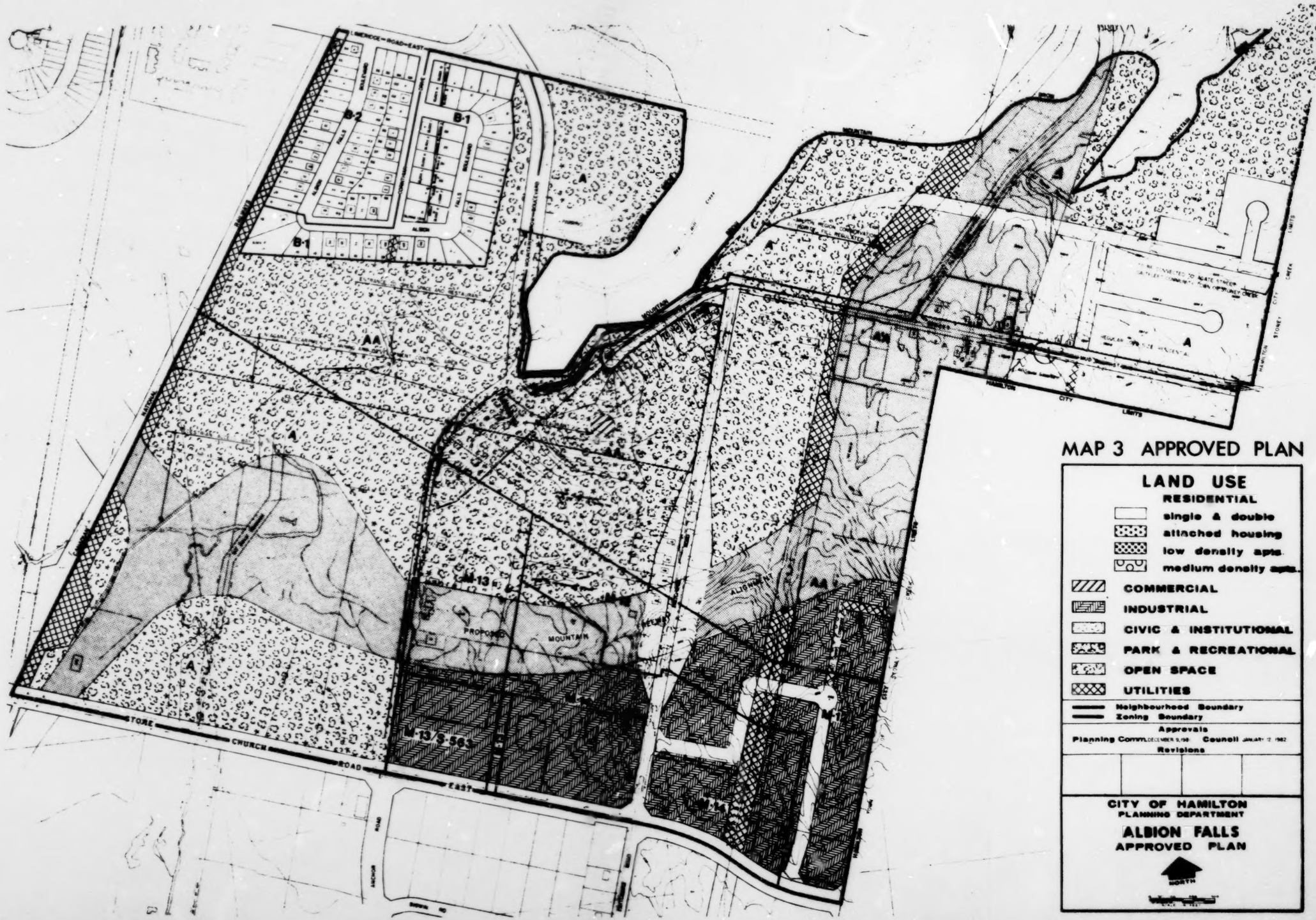
CITY OF HAMILTON

ALBION FALLS

NORTH

0 50 100 m

Planning and Development Department
Hamilton-Wentworth Region



MAP 3 APPROVED PLAN

LAND USE

RESIDENTIAL

- single & double
- attached housing
- low density apts.
- medium density apts.

- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- CIVIC & INSTITUTIONAL
- PARK & RECREATIONAL
- OPEN SPACE
- UTILITIES

- Neighbourhood Boundary
- Zoning Boundary

Approvals

Planning Comm. DECEMBER 9,1981 Council JANUARY 12 1982

Revisions

CITY OF HAMILTON
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

ALBION FALLS
APPROVED PLAN

NORTH